

Message Text

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TAGS: PGOV, IS, US, EG, XF

SUBJECT: BRIEFING FOR SADAT ON STATUS OF MIDDLE EAST
NEGOTIATIONS

1. AS YOU WILL SEE FROM LEWIS' REPORTING TELEGRAM WHICH
WAS REPEATED TO YOU, DAYAN HAS ASKED US IF WE WOULD BE
WILLING TO SEEK SADAT'S ANSWERS TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS, ON
THE GROUNDS THAT IF HE HAD FIRM ASSURANCES ALONG THESE
LINES IT WOULD HELP HIM MAKE THE CASE TO THE ISRAELI
CABINET FOR POSITIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS WE HAVE
PUT TO HIM. IN OUR REPLY, WHICH WE ARE ALSO SENDING YOU,
WE HAVE INSTRUCTED LEWIS TO GO BACK TO DAYAN TO SAY THAT
WE WOULD BE WILLING TO SEEK THESE ANSWERS IF WE COULD
INDICATE TO SADAT THAT ISRAEL WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE US

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POSITIVE RESPONSES TO OUR QUESTIONS ON THE KEY ISSUE OF
WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD.

2. YOU SHOULD SEE SADAT AS SOON AS CONVENIENT AND BRIEF
HIM ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

-- SINCE THE REPORT WE GAVE SADAT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

THE DAYAN VISIT WE HAVE HAD SOME FURTHER EXCHANGES WITH DAYAN AND WANT TO BRING SADAT UP TO DATE.

---AS WE PREVIOUSLY INFORMED SADAT, AT END OF SECRETARY'S MEETINGS WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON WE ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD ENDEAVOR TO PROVIDE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS WE POSED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD.

SPECIFICALLY, THESE QUESTIONS ARE:

(1) COULD ISRAEL SAY THAT AT THE END OF THE FIVE YEARS THE QUESTION OF FINAL STATUS OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WOULD BE DEFINITELY RESOLVED; AND

(2) WHAT COULD ISRAEL SAY ABOUT THE MECHANISM BY WHICH THIS ISSUE WOULD BE RESOLVED?

-- DAYAN UNDERTOOK TO GET US ANSWERS (BEGIN CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO DO THIS) BUT CAUTIONED THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE CABINET DISCUSSION AND THAT THIS WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL DAYAN RETURNED, NEXT WEEKEND, FROM A TRIP ABROAD.

-- IN THE MEANTIME DAYAN HAS TALKED WITH OUR AMBASSADOR AND HAS SAID IT WOULD FACILITATE HIS PERSONAL EFFORT TO GET THE CABINET TO AGREE TO POSITIVE RESPONSES TO OUR
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QUESTIONS IF HE COULD FIRST HAVE ASSURANCES FROM SADAT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(1) IS SADAT READY TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE ARAB PARTIES IN NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE WEST BANK AND GAZA IF JORDAN DOES NOT JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO CONCLUDE PEACE AGREEMENTS COVERING THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AS WELL AS THE SINAI IF NEGOTIATIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL?

(2) IS IT SADAT'S POSITION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA THAT HE WILL NOT INSIST ON TOTAL WITHDRAWAL AND THAT HE WILL ACCEPT "MINOR MODIFICATIONS" IN THE FINAL BORDERS?

(3) IS HE PREPARED TO SEE DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WHICH INVOLVE THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES IN LIMITED AREAS AT STRATEGIC POINTS?

(4) WILL HE ACCEPT THE U.S. ASWAN FORMULA IN LIEU OF INSISTENCE ON SELF-DETERMINATION OR AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE?

-- IN REPLY WE HAVE INFORMED DAYAN THAT IF HE COULD INDICATE ISRAEL WAS PREPARED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE QUESTIONS WE PUT TO HIM WE WOULD BE WILLING TO APPROACH SADAT IN AN EFFORT TO ELICIT ANSWERS TO HIS QUESTIONS.

IN THE ABSENCE OF INDICATIONS OF FURTHER ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY, WE TOLD DAYAN THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO GET THE CLARIFICATIONS FROM SADAT THAT HE IS SEEKING.

-- SOME OF THE POINTS ON WHICH DAYAN SEEKS ANSWERS FROM SADAT ARE ONES THAT CAME UP IN DISCUSSIONS DURING HIS WASHINGTON TALKS, BUT DAYAN DID NOT THEN, AS HE HAS NOW, FORMULATE THEM INTO A SPECIFIC SET OF QUESTIONS. DAYAN SAID DURING WASHINGTON TALKS THAT THESE WERE HIGHLY IM-
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PORTANT MATTERS FOR ISRAEL AND EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT HE COULD DISCUSS THEM PERSONALLY WITH SADAT.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE EGYPTIAN WEST BANK/GAZA COUNTER-PROPOSAL WE HAVE LOOKED CAREFULLY AT THE NEW VERSION OF THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL AND AGREE WITH YOUR JUDGMENT THAT IT IS ONLY A SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT OVER ITS PREDECESSOR. WE UNDERSTAND EXTREME CONCERN ON PART OF EGYPTIANS TO PROTECT THEIR FLANKS FROM THE PALESTINIANS AND OTHER ARABS AND RECOGNIZE THE LIMITATIONS IN WHAT WE CAN EXPECT TO GET BY WAY OF FURTHER IMPROVEMENT. NEVERTHELESS, WE THINK IT IS WORTH MAKING ONE FURTHER EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SOME IMPROVEMENT (EVEN IF IT IS RELATIVELY MODEST) PARTICULARLY SINCE SADAT HAS APPARENTLY YET TO GIVE HIS FINAL APPROVAL TO THE DOCUMENT. PENDING ISRAELI REACTION AND OUR ASSESSMENT AS TO WHETHER SOMETHING IS POSSIBLE ON THE OTHER TRACK, WE DO NOT WANT TO PRESS SADAT FOR SPECIFIC CHANGES BUT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO CONVEY TO HIM SOME COMMENTS OF A GENERAL NATURE WITH SUGGESTION HE LOOK THE PAPER OVER ONCE AGAIN TO MAKE SURE THIS IS REALLY A DOCUMENT HE WOULD WISH TRANSMITTED TO THE ISRAELIS. PLEASE MAKE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS TO HIM:

--WE APPRECIATE POSITIVE RESPONSE SADAT AND HIS ADVISORS HAVE GIVEN TO OUR SUGGESTION THAT THEY TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE EGYPTIAN PAPER ON WEST BANK/GAZA.

-- IN CERTAIN RESPECTS THERE HAS BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT BUT WE MUST BE FRANK IN STATING THAT IN OUR JUDGMENT THE OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IS SLIGHT. PAPER STILL READS MORE LIKE A LEGAL STATEMENT OF POSITION THAN IT DOES A NEGOTIATING DOCUMENT.

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-- BASIC PROBLEM, AND ONE THAT TROUBLES US, IS THAT THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT GO AS FAR ON THE KEY ISSUES AS SADAT HAS GONE PUBLICLY. FOR THIS REASON IT WILL BE SEEN AS RETROGRESSIVE BY ISRAELI PUBLIC OPINION AND WILL BE SEIZED UPON BY THE HARDLINERS IN ISRAEL AS VALID REASON WHY ISRAEL SHOULD NOT MOVE TO MORE FORTHCOMING TERMS ON THE WEST BANK/GAZA ISSUE. IT WOULD DO NOTHING TO PROMOTE

INTERNAL DEBATE IN ISRAEL ON BEGIN'S POLICIES AND WOULD IN FACT UNDERCUT MODERATES WHO ARE SEEKING TO GENERATE PRESSURE FOR MORE FLEXIBLE ISRAELI POSITIONS.

-- AT MINIMUM, IT SEEMS TO US THE EGYPTIAN PAPER COULD BE REVISED TO MAKE IT CONSISTENT WITH PROPOSALS THAT SADAT HAS MADE PUBLICLY WITHOUT COST IN TERMS OF EGYPT'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARABS.

-- WE WONDER IF SADAT WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO LOOK AT THE PAPER ONCE AGAIN WITH THESE THOUGHTS IN MIND. ESSENTIAL POINT IS THAT TO EXTENT PAPER CAN GO BEYOND MERE RESTATEMENT OF LEGAL PRINCIPLES AND BE GIVEN CHARACTER OF A NEGOTIATING DOCUMENT IT WILL HAVE FAR MORE IMPACT IN ISRAEL AND FOR THAT MATTER ON U.S. PUBLIC OPINION AS WELL.

4. WITH RESPECT TO BEGIN'S VISIT HERE ON WHICH THE EGYPTIANS HAVE REQUESTED TO BE BRIEFED, YOU MAY STATE AS FOLLOWS:

-- SADAT SHOULD KNOW THAT RELATIVELY BRIEF SUBSTANTIVE TALKS WITH BEGIN DID NOT CARRY US BEYOND ANY OF POINTS REACHED WITH DAYAN LAST WEEK. BEGIN CONFIRMED THAT DAYAN HAD CONVEYED TO HIM THE QUESTIONS THAT SECRETARY PUT TO DAYAN REGARDING WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN AT END OF INTERIM PERIOD FOR WEST BANK/GAZA. BOTH SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF ISRAEL'S RESPONSE. BEGIN ACKNOWLEDGED CRUCIAL NATURE OF ISSUE AND PROMISED TO REPLY AFTER DUE CABINET CONSIDERATION, IN TWO TO THREE WEEKS

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TIME (HE EXPLAINED THAT DECISION COULD NOT BE MADE IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN TO ISRAEL MAY 8 BECAUSE DAYAN WILL BE OUT OF THE COUNTRY THEN).

-- AS EGYPTIANS WILL NO DOUBT HAVE NOTED, IN KEEPING WITH SPIRIT OF ISRAELI THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVITIES, THERE WAS WARM EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS UNDERSCORING THE

CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. BEGIN'S VISIT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO REASSURE ISRAEL THAT WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO ITS SECURITY AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN SEARCH FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. PROJECTION OF IMAGE OF CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ISRAEL SHOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL AT THIS TIME AND WE BELIEVE WILL BE HELPFUL AS NEGOTIATIONS MOVE FORWARD. OF COURSE SOME DISTORTION IS INEVITABLE IN PRESS REPORTING OF SUCH EVENTS AND INCORRECT INTERPRETATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC REMARKS OF THOSE INVOLVED. WE WANT TO ASSURE PRESIDENT SADAT THAT NEITHER PRESIDENT NOR SECRETARY SAID ANYTHING, EITHER IN PRIVATE TALKS OR IN PUBLIC, WHICH WOULD IN ANY WAY MEAN A CHANGE

IN OUR POLICY, IN THE IDEAS WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH SADAT, OR IN COMMITMENTS MADE BY THE PRESIDENT TO SADAT. VANCE

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